


Meade, George Gordon



George Gordon Meade, b. Cadiz, Spain, Dec. 31, 1815, d. Nov. 6, 1872, was a Union general in the U.S. Civil War and the victor of the Battle at Gettysburg. A graduate of West Point (1835), he won a brevet in the Mexican War (1846-48). When the Civil War came, Meade commanded a brigade of the Pennsylvania Reserves.

Although he was severely wounded in the PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN (1862), Meade performed well at the Second Battle of BULL RUN and, as a division commander, at the battles of South Mountain, and ANTIETAM and FREDERICKSBURG,. Promoted to corps command, Meade was not heavily engaged at the Battle of C HANCELLORSVILLE (1863), although he commanded effectively.

He was named commander of the Army of the Potomac a few days before the opening of the Battle of Gettysburg (see GETTYSBURG, BATTLE OF). Although not intending to fight at Gettysburg, Meade showed skill in his handling of infantry, artillery, and cavalry, effectively led his unit commanders, and defeated the Confederates. He is sometimes criticized, however, for permitting Robert E. LEE and his army to escape.

Meade served ably under Ulysses S. Grant until the war ended, and then he commanded several military departments.

Warren W. Hassler, Jr.

Bibliography: Cleaves, Freeman, Meade of Gettysburg (1960; repr. 1991); Meade, George, The Life and Letters of George Gordon Meade, 2 vols. (1913).

1. The first part of the report is a general description of the area.

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